KU BASKETBALL
Jayhawks fall at home to Texas Tech 1B

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‘BLACK MARKET’

KCK firefighters paid $920,000 for shifts they didn’t work

FILE, TAMMY LJUNGBLAD tljungblad@kcstar.com

An analysis by the Unified Government blasts shift trading practices by Kansas City, Kan., Fire Department, saying it results in an unsafe work environment and firefighters being paid for work they didn’t do.

BY STEVE VOCKRODT
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Firefighters of the Kansas City, Kan., Fire Department were paid $920,000 for work they didn’t do in 2017 because of a practice known as shift trading, a payroll analysis by the Unified Government has found.

The shift trading, the report said, also posed safety risks from fatigued firefighters.

UG Mayor Mark Holland called the report evidence of “widespread corruption.”

“This is a complete abuse of taxpayer dollars,” Holland said. “I think the whole city should be outraged at the abuse of taxpayer resources by the fire department.”

Shift trading is common in fire departments, where firefighters often work 24-hour shifts. In most circumstances, firefighters who want to trade a shift must do so with someone of the same rank, and they are expected to reciprocate. They are also limited on how many shifts they can trade in a year.

Firefighters trading shifts away are paid as though they did work the shift. If trades are reciprocated, pay to the firefighters evens out. If the trade is not traded back, then one firefighter is paid for a shift worked by another.

The UG analysis, obtained by The Star, shows that several KCK Fire Department firefighters traded away large numbers of shifts without trading them back. The department has 391 firefighters.

It named firefighters that it calls the “top 25 traders” who received 25 to 52 weeks of paid time off in 2017 as a result of trading shifts. Of those, 15 exceeded the limit of 24 traded shifts in a year.

Firefighters are normally scheduled to work 121 shifts a

SEE SHIFTS, 2A

Brownback to remain as governor until confirmed

BY JONATHAN SHORMAN AND HUNTER WOODALL
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TOPEKA

Gov. Sam Brownback tweeted definitively Tuesday that he will remain in office until he wins confirmation for a post in the Trump administration.

Sam Brownback

And it’s Brownback who next week will give the State of the State address and deliver the governor’s budget proposal.

“Looking forward to another great legislative session,” Brownback said on Twitter Tuesday afternoon. “I will remain Governor until confirmed by the US Senate.”

Brownback had previously said that Lt. Gov. Jeff Colyer was taking the lead in developing the budget proposal, the governor’s blueprint for how Kansas should spend billions in tax dollars.

“This budget is Gov. Brownback’s budget,” Colyer spokesman Kendall Marr said Tuesday. “He’s had final say on this.”

The governor’s office said the speech will include Brownback’s response to the Kansas Supreme Court’s ruling in the fall that found school funding inadequate under the state constitution.

Speculation about who would be performing the duties of the state’s highest office has swirled since Brownback’s nomination to become ambassador at-large for international religious freedom stalled in the U.S. Senate.

President Donald Trump nominated Brownback in July,

SEE BROWNBACK, 7A

VanTrust Real Estate LLC

This rendering shows the proposed mixed-use redevelopment plan for the former Great Mall of the Great Plains site in Olathe.

$305 million plan for Olathe Great Mall site envisions a mixed-use sports destination

BY MATT CAMPBELL
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Developers envision a $305 million plan for the site of the razed Great Mall of the Great Plains in Olathe.

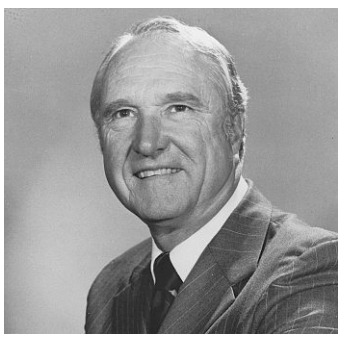
An application to use Kansas STAR bonds to finance the project proposes a mixed-use project with a heavy emphasis on sports and fitness.

It would also incorporate entertainment venues, restaurants, retail space, office and medical office space, hotels, residential units, and public spaces that could draw nearly 1.8 million visitors a year to the

SEE MALL, 7A

NATION & WORLD
TRUMP URGES ACTION AGAINST CLINTON AIDE
President Trump on Tuesday appeared to suggest that Huma Abedin, a former top aide to Hillary Clinton, should face jail time. 14A

NATION & WORLD
HATCH TO RETIRE FROM SENATE
Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah, the longest-serving Senate Republican, announced Tuesday that he will retire at the end of the year. 5A



LOCAL
LARRY WINN JR. DIES AT 98
Former U.S. Rep. Larry Winn Jr., whose time in Washington spanned five presidencies, died on New Year’s Eve at the age of 98. 4A

BUSINESS
LOAN MOGUL TO BE SENTENCED
Scott Tucker, convicted of running an illegal payday lending business, faces sentencing on Friday. 6A

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